

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-17

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 SY-10 M-03

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FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5833

C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO 3239

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OGEN, PINS, APER, MX

SUBJECT: LEONHARDY KIDNAPPING: PROSECUTION PROCEEDINGS

1. WE HAVE BEEN INFORMED, AND CHARGE CHECKED THIS OUT WITH INTERIOR MINISTER, THAT BY MEXICAN LAW SOME FORM OF LEGAL COMPLAINT BY OFFENDED PARTY OR HIS REPRESENTATIVE WILL BE REQUIRED IN PROSECUTION OF ANYONE FOUND TO BE INVOLVED IN LEONHARDY KIDNAPPING. WE HAVE INSTRUCTED CONGEN/ GUADALAJARA TO INFORM AUTHORITIES WHEN APPROACHED THIS SUBJECT, AND WE HAVE TAKEN SAME POSITION WITH INTERIOR MINISTER HERE, THAT WE DEEPLY INTERESTED IN DOING EVERYTHING APPROPRIATE TO ASSIST MEXICAN AUTHORITIES IN IDENTIFICATION AND PROSECUTION OF CULPRITS, BUT WILL HAVE TO CONSULT WASHINGTON WITH REGARD TO ANY LEGAL PROCEDURES OR REQUIREMENTS GOM MIGHT SUGGEST. WE ARE AWAITING FURTHER OVERTURES FROM GOM BUT IN MEANTIME WOULD LIKE ANY PRELIMINARY GUIDANCE DEPARTMENT MAY HAVE TO OFFER. AS DEPARTMENT KNOWS, CONGEN LEONHARDY HAS BEEN MADE AVAILABLE FOR EXTENSIVE DEBRIEFINGS WHICH EVIDENTLY CONTAINED CONSIDERABLE DETAIL OF INTEREST TO MEXICAN AUTHORITIES.

2. LATE ITEM: WE HAVE JUST BEEN INFORMED ON AN URGENT BASIS BY OUR CONSULATE IN GUADALAJARA OF THE NATURE OF THE DOCUMENT NEEDED. IT IS A BRIEF NARRATIVE STATEMENT BY CONGEN LEONHARDY OF THE EPISODE TO BE SIGNED BY HIM, NOT UNDER OATH. THIS CAN BE DONE
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TO TRANSLATE POLITICAL

GOODWILL INTO TANGIBLE ECONOMIC COOPERATION. MEDIA TREATMENT

IN BOTH COUNTRIES HAS HAILED VISIT AS GREAT SUCCESS, BUT AUTHORITATIVE NEPALESE SOURCE TELLS US DHAR WAS NOT PARTICULARLY SATISFIED WITH OUTCOME OF VISIT, SINCE GON TEAM REFUSED TO BE INVEIGLED BY HIS PROPOSALS FOR JOINT INDUSTRIAL VENTURES, PERMANENT MECHANISM TO COORDINATE PLANNING, AND OTHER INNOVATIONS THAT WOULD LOCK NEPALESE ECONOMY CLOSER TO INDIA'S. OUR PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT IS THAT FOR ONCE NEPALESE HELD THEIR OWN IN BILATERAL ECONOMIC TALKS WITH INDIA AND RESULTS, PARTICULARLY IN RE KARNALI, CAN EVENTUALLY PROVE BENEFICIAL TO ALL. END SUMMARY.

3. ATMOSPHERICS: INDIAN PLANNING MINISTER D P DHAR'S VISIT TO KATHMANDU APRIL 29 - MAY 3 ATTRACTED WIDE ATTENTION IN NEPALESE AND INDIAN PRESS AND WAS GENERALLY HAILED AS MILESTONE IN EVOLUTION OF INDIAN AID TO NEPAL AND INDO- NEPALESE ECONOMIC RELATIONS GENERALLY. ONE SENIOR NEPALESE NEGOTIATOR SAID DHAR WAS CHARMING, VERY WELL INFORMED, AND APPEARED TO HAVE VIRTUAL BLANK CHECK FROM DELHI -- E. G., HE WAS ABLE NOT ONLY TO DISCUSS AID PROJECTS BUT TO SIGN ON THE DOTTED LINE FOR THEM, PRIME EXAMPLE BEING KATHMANDU- DHANKUTA ROAD (SEE BELOW). GENERALLY ACCEPTED INFERENCE HERE IS THAT DHAR ARRIVED WITH SPECIFIC AUTHORITY FROM PRIME MINISTER GANDHI TO TRANSLATE POLITICAL GOODWILL ENGENDERED BY PM'S VISIT (REF. A) INTO TANGIBLE ECONOMIC COOPERATION. HE ARRIVED WITH IMPRESSIVE TEAM OF INDIAN EXPERTS, AND QUICKLY GOT TO WORK WITH NEPALESE TEAM LED BY AGRICULTURE MINISTER HARI BAHADUR BASNYET AND SECONDED BY DR HARKA GURUNG, VICE CHAIRMAN OF PLANNING COMMISSION. WIDE RANGE OF BILATERAL ECONOMIC RELATIONS WERE DISCUSSED AND RESULTS WERE SUMMARIZED AT END OF VISIT IN UNUSUALLY EXPLICIT (AND ACCURATE) JOINT STATEMENT (BEING POUCHED UNDER COVER OF AN AIRGRAM).

4. KARNALI. AS INDICATED IN REFERENCE B, NEPALESE HAVE BEEN KEEPING THIS MASSIVE HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT ON THE BACK BURNER LARGELY BECAUSE OF THEIR ABIDING SENSE OF INFERIORITY VIS- A- VIS SUPERIOR INDIAN NEGOTIATING SKILLS. MEANWHILE GOI HAS APPEARED FROM HERE TO BE INCREASINGLY ANXIOUS TO GET THIS PROJECT MOVING IN VIEW OF INCREASING POWER SHORTAGES IN NEIGHBORING NORTH
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INDIAN AREAS, BUT UNTIL NOW HAS BEEN INSISTING ON STRICTLY BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS WITH GON. PROBABLY THE MOST IMPORTANT SINGLE RESULT OF DHAR'S VISIT WAS THAT GOI GAVE UP THIS INSISTENCE ON BILATERALISM AS PRICE FOR GETTING NEPALESE TO AGREE TO GET THE PROJECT OFF DEAD CENTER. DR GURUNG, DURING CONFIDENTIAL BRIEFING FOR THIS EMBASSY ON VISIT (MEMCON BEING POUCHED), SAID THAT DHAR'S INITIAL POSITION WAS THAT ONLY OUTSIDERS TO BE ADMITTED TO THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS SHOULD BE REPRESENTATIVES OF INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS DIRECTLY INVOLVED AND THAT THEIR JURISDICTION SHOULD BE LIMITED TO ADVICE ON FINANCIAL TERMS. HOWEVER, DHAR AGREED DURING VISIT TO FORMULATION EXPRESSED IN JOINT STATEMENT THAT THERE SHOULD BE A COMMITTEE OF DIRECTORS COMPRISING REPRESENTATIVES OF GON AND GOI... " AND, AS HIS MAJESTY'S

GOVERNMENT DESIRES, REPRESENTATIVES OF INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES."

THIS

APPARENTLY MEANS THAT GON IS NOW FREE TO RECRUIT TECHNICAL
EXPERTISE FROM VARIETY OF UN AGENCIES AS WELL AS IBRD TO HELP
IN FORMULATING NATIONAL GOALS AND PRIORITIES IN RE KARNALI
PROJECT, AND IN DECIDING WHAT KIND OF PROJECT WOULD BEST FIT
THESE GOALS AND PRIORITIES, AND THEN TO PARTICIPATE AS MEMBERS
OF NEPALESE TEAM IN BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS WITH INDIA. THIS WILL,
OF COURSE, TAKE CONSIDERABLE TIME (DR GURUNG MENTIONED A FIGURE
OF A COUPLE OF YEARS BEFORE GON MIGHT BE PREPARED TO OPEN
FORMAL DISCUSSION WITH GOI).

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